

Rep. Baird Helps Secure Increased Federal Meth Funding (June 14, 2006)

Washington, D.C. - Congressman Brian Baird, a national leader in the anti-meth fight and founder of the Congressional Caucus to Fight and Control Methamphetamine, helped ensure that billions of dollars for local, state, and federal anti-meth programs were included in the FY 2007 Transportation Treasury Housing and Urban Development (TTHUD) Appropriations bill that passed the House today. The bill is now headed to the Senate for its approval.

"By all accounts meth is becoming a more serious national problem, yet federal funding to help state and local governments fight the drug has steadily decreased since 2002," said Congressman Baird. "Without proper federal funding, our local and state officials – the folks who are on the ground fighting this drug every single day – are left with their hands tied. I don't think that's right."

"Our local and state law enforcement officials, educators, and drug treatment professionals should not have to hold their breathe every year waiting for the federal government to step up to the plate," continued Congressman Baird. "We will never stop the spread of meth if we don't fully fund anti-meth programs."

Congressman Baird vowed to fight the significant cuts in federal meth funding that the President proposed in his Fiscal Year 2007 budget. Earlier this year, Congressman Baird and his Meth Caucus colleagues sent a letter to appropriators requesting adequate funding for meth-related programs. Congressman Baird successfully fought similar meth-related budget cuts throughout last year's appropriations process.

Many important meth programs will be allocated funding in appropriations bills that have yet to come before the House.

Congressman Baird helped secure funding for the following national anti-meth programs in today's TTHUD bill. Specific allocations for Washington State have yet to be determined:

High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA): \$227 million

The HIDTA program serves to enhance and coordinate drug control efforts among local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to help reduce drug trafficking. Congressman Baird helped secure an HIDTA designation for Southwest Washington, which has led to greater financial assistance for the region.

This appropriation is an increase of \$2,270,000 over the enacted FY06 level for HIDTA, and a \$20,000,000 increase above the President's FY07 budget request. An additional \$8 million was added to the bill for HIDTA through an amendment that Congressman Baird supported.

Additionally, the TTHUD bill does not support the Administration's proposal to move HIDTA to the Department of Justice. This is a win for local, state, and federal agencies that are generating an unprecedented level of cooperation under the current oversight structure.

Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP): \$26.928 million

ONDCP guides the nation's efforts to both reduce the use, manufacturing, and trafficking of illicit drugs, and the associated crime, violence, and health consequences of illegal drug use. In November, ONDCP Director John Walters solicited Congressman Baird's input on meth for the National Drug Control Strategy and incorporated some of his recommendations in both the National Strategy and 2006 Synthetic Drug Control Strategy.

This appropriation is a \$289,000 increase over the enacted FY06 funding level for ONDCP, and a \$3,619,000 increase over the President's FY07 budget request

National Alliance for Model State Drug Laws: \$1 million

The National Alliance for Model State Drug Laws serves an important function by reviewing state drug laws and proposing model state laws to the federal government. Most drug enforcement, treatment, and prevention are provided at the state and local levels; the federal government has a strong interest in the effective state drug policies that the Alliance helps promote. The Alliance also holds conferences on meth enforcement, bringing together state drug enforcement officials to discuss new solutions to meth abuse and trafficking.

The Alliance received \$1 million in FY06. The President proposed zeroing out funding for the program for FY07. Congressman Baird helped fight the Administration's proposal to zero out funding for the program in FY06, and supported the House authorized funding level of \$1.5 million included in the ONDCP Reauthorization Act of 2005.

Drug-Free Communities Program: \$80 million

The Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Program assists local community anti-drug coalitions to prevent substance abuse among young people. This is a vital program that promotes prevention in the hardest hit communities.

This program also received \$80 million in FY06. The President requested \$79 million for this program in his FY07 budget.

National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign: \$100 million

The National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign is a strategically integrated communications effort that combines advertising with public communications outreach to deliver anti-drug messages and skills to America's youth, their parents, and other influential adults.

Recognizing the devastating impact that meth is having on so many communities across the nation, the Partnership for a Drug-Free America and the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign recently created hard-hitting drug education messages focusing on meth. This new campaign engages communities in fighting the meth problem in their cities and towns. Given the severity of the "second hand" impact of meth, the Partnership also created a community-targeted program to prevent the spread of meth in affected parts of the country. These ads and activities will begin running this year in Washington State and across the nation.

Congressman Baird fought to secure \$120 million for the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign in FY07, as proposed in the President's budget. The Campaign received \$100 million in FY06.

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